

ISDA- Clean Water Indiana Fund and Division of Soils Conservation 2008-09 Budget Proposal and Descriptions

CWI- 08 Budget Proposal	4,250,000	
Current Staff		1,200,000
USDA Programs		
CREP 1	600,000	
CREP 2 (New funding)	500,000	
Conservation Support Program	200,000	
		1,300,000
SWCD Focus		
SWCD In-kind	920,000	
08 CWI Grants	350,000	
Leadership Institute	158,000	
		1,428,000
Misc. Expenses		
Contract (field staff rent & IT exps)	220,000	
Equipment	100,000	
Travel	2,000	
		322,000
Total		4,250,000

Current Staff: This is salary and fringe for 22 Resource Specialists that are currently working throughout the state with landowners. They partner with NRCS to support the Conservation Implementation Teams to leverage USDA programs and practices. This is only a portion of the technical assistance that is provided by the Division of Soil Conservation. This technical assistance has been responsible for millions of dollars coming into Indiana directly to landowners from USDA. Without this staff, landowners would not be able to access the funding made available through the 2002 Farm Bill.

CREP 1: In 2005, the State of Indiana (Lt.Gov) and USDA signed an agreement to implement conservation practices throughout Indiana. USDA

pays landowners an additional 20% for land rental per acre and cost shares on practice expenses at 90%. Indiana pays an additional one time payment ranging from \$100 to \$400 per acre to landowners for participating in the program. These are for contracts of 14-15 years. Additional incentives are included in this program and are provided by The Nature Conservancy and the Department of Natural Resources. This program is set to end December, 2007, unless Indiana signs a continuance with USDA or a new agreement is reached once the 2008 Farm Bill is implemented. Either way, this contract has an opportunity to continue talks between ISDA and USDA.

CREP 2: A new CREP will be possible once the 2008 Farm Bill is signed. If it is delayed this budgeted funding can be rolled into the CREP 1 to continue work in the current program or into an amended contract. Amendments are allowed and may include additional watersheds, acres or practices.

Conservation Support Program: Technical assistance is a required portion of a CREP and this funding is proposed to increase technical assistance through existing staff or through private contracts or agreements. This funding will offer incentives to private service providers throughout the state that are currently working with landowners in various capacities. An example would be the crop consultant agronomists (CCA), of which there are over 600 in the state. These CCAs work one-on-one with farmers to prescribe herbicide, fertilizer and pesticide applications to crops. Many of the best management practices (BMPs) that are included in the CREP could be promoted and implemented for farmers by the CCAs. There are other service providers, such as SWCDs, that could participate in this incentive program broadening the reach of ISDA and improving customer service for the CREP.

SWCD In-kind: In IC 14-32-8 (CWI Funding), the statute requires that if funded CWI will match \$1 for \$1 SWCD funds that originate through county funding up to \$10,000. The match may exceed \$10,000 if the SSCB approves additional allocations. To date, the SSCB believes that \$10,000 is appropriate funding for administrative support at the SWCD local level. In the future, as SWCDs increase their conservation services, the SSCB may approve additional match and could allocate funding as is provided in statute.

CWI Grants: This competitive grant program began in 2005 to offer SWCD opportunities to implement special programs throughout the state in support of conservation initiatives. These grants have proven to be very success in accomplishing on the ground conservation implementation. Landowner participation has been high. In order to be eligible to receive a grant the SWCD must have a business plan and the grant funding must be utilized in support of the initiatives in the plan.

Leadership Institute: This funding is allocated to improve leadership throughout the SWCD supervisors and staff. Since they are the local eyes and ears of the CWI program, it is imperative that they have the skills, knowledge and tools to provide good service to local landowners and communities. This training incentive is allocated by county with each qualifying for \$1500 to support training expenses. Receipts and mileage must be submitted for reimbursement. An additional \$20,000 has been budgeted to provide training conferences and regional workshops. Many of these trainings are coordinated by our District Support Staff and are developed by the regional SWCD working groups. Specific training based on regional needs offers effective and efficient training while encouraging team building across county and regional boundaries.

Contract: Over the past two years, ISDA has paid rent for field staff to our USDA partners for office space, internet and network services. ISDA staff work on the USDA network and provide service to landowners through their programs and computer systems. It is anticipated that in 2008 ISDA will need to pay \$5000 per person for seat charges to continue participating in this system. ISDA is considering other options but changes will require a new infrastructure if the past systems are not utilized. ISDA is considering mobile offices and wireless capacity for the field staff. This would improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Equipment: In the past, the budgeted funding for equipment has been much higher. While additional equipment would improve efficiency for our field staff, ISDA is cutting this area to accommodate the rest of the budget. The budget of \$100,000 is to prepare for a new Indiana Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) system that is being coordinated through INDOT. For our staff to utilize this new technology, ISDA is anticipating up-front infrastructure expenses.

Travel: Each year one SSCB member travels to the National Association of Conservation Districts Annual Meeting. The SSCB is the peer review group over the SWCDs in Indiana. The conference offers the board an opportunity to learn about SWCD efforts going on in other states and builds relationships with our Indiana SWCD leadership. The SSCB member is the only representative from ISDA at the conference.

DSC- 08 Budget Proposal	1,968,750	
Current Staff		1,300,000
Administration (all staff support)		550,000
Equipment		118,750
Total		1,968,750

Current Staff: The staff budgeted in the Division of Soil Conservation account represent the central office administrative staff as well as the supervisor level field staff and the district support staff. The staff is broken into tiers and the staff within this account represents the senior staff in the DSC.

Administration: The funding allocated for administration covers fuel, vehicle repairs, computer support, office equipment, phones and rent, as well as other general support expenses. Training and travel are also included in this fund. This allocation supports all the expenses of the entire staff, CWI and DSC.

Equipment: The field-staff depend on highly technical equipment for their daily duties. Robotic Survey Equipment, along with extensive hardware needs to support engineering software and data management, is part of the equipment support required. Additionally, vehicle purchases are rotated through the field on a 3-4 year basis.